



JANUARY 2006

New Year's Safety Resolution

Most of us start the New Year with great hopes and anticipation for the upcoming year. I for one, am infamous for having my New Year's resolutions last approximately four to six weeks and I am sure not the only one in this category. But, have you thought about making a resolution to work and play safer in the year 2006?

Many people do not consider the impact of a disabling injury. How would your family and friends be affected? How would your quality of life change? It can quickly become apparent that the independence most of us take for granted can come to a skidding halt in a matter of moments. Most of our homes are not equipped for handicapped access. Even if the handicap is due to a temporary medical problem, getting a drink of water can become a huge obstacle.

Most of us are in a hurry to get to work, get home, get the yard work done, and probably pride ourselves on being handy in the home, but do we take the time to slow down and do it safely. How many times do you make that quick trip to the grocery store (just a few blocks away) without a seat belt or use the weed eater without any eye protection?

In the New Year, remember this one thing... your actions do affect other people! A disabling injury affects not only you, but every life that you touch. So take care and be safe in 2006.

New Year's Resolutions for Kids

In addition to your own New Year's [Parenting Resolutions](#), this year, how about helping your kids, even your preschoolers and younger school age kids, come up with some New Year's Resolutions? With the rise in [childhood obesity](#), continued parental complaints about discipline and behavior problems, and continued teen problems, such as drug and alcohol use, some New Year's Resolutions to be healthy might be a good idea.

This year, the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) has made it easy by providing these 20 New Year's tips, which you might talk to your child about trying, depending on their age:

Preschoolers

- I will clean up my toys.
- I will [brush my teeth](#) twice a day, and [wash my hands](#) after going to the bathroom and before eating.

- I won't tease dogs - even friendly ones.

I will [avoid being bitten](#) by keeping my fingers and face away from their mouths.

School Age Kids

- I will drink [milk](#) and water, and limit soda and [fruit drinks](#).
- I will apply [sunscreen](#) before I go outdoors. I will try to stay in the shade whenever possible and wear a hat and sunglasses, especially when I'm playing sports.
- I will try to [find a sport](#) (like basketball or soccer) or an activity (like playing tag, jumping rope, dancing or riding my bike) that I like and do it at least three times a week!
- I will always wear a helmet when [bicycling](#).
- I will wear my seat belt every time I get in a car. I'll sit in the back seat and use a [booster seat](#) until I am tall enough to use a lap/shoulder seat belt.
- I'll be nice to other kids. I'll be friendly to kids who need friends - like someone who is shy, or is new to my school
- I'll never give out personal information such as my name, home address, school name or telephone number on the Internet. Also, I'll never send a picture of myself to someone I chat with on the computer without my parent's permission.

Teens

- I will eat at least one [fruit and one vegetable](#) every day, and I will limit the amount of soda I drink.
- I will take care of my body through [physical activity](#) and [nutrition](#).
- I will choose non-violent television shows and video games, and I will spend only one to two hours each day - at the most - on these activities.
- I will help out in my community - through volunteering, working with community groups or by joining a group that helps people in need.
- I will wipe negative "self talk" (i.e. "I can't do it" or "I'm so dumb") out of my vocabulary.

- When I feel angry or stressed out, I will take a break and find constructive ways to deal with the stress, such as exercising, reading, writing in a journal or discussing my problem with a parent or friend.
- When faced with a difficult decision, I will talk with an adult about my choices.
- I will be careful about whom I choose to date, and always treat the other person with respect and without coercion or violence.
- I will resist peer pressure to try [drugs](#) and [alcohol](#).

TRAFFIC SAFETY ALERT



Cell phone users take note!! Cell phone use is prohibited in any vehicle on DOD installations without the use of a hands-free device. You may talk on cell phones without a hands-free device if the vehicle is safely parked. Cell phone use in government vehicles is prohibited without a hands-free device on and off base.

Check Your Hotspots

Each year fire claims the lives of 4,000 Americans, injures tens of thousands, and causes billions of dollars worth of damage. People living in rural areas are more than twice as likely to die in a fire than those living in mid-sized cities or suburban areas. The misuse of wood stoves, portable space heaters and kerosene heaters are especially common risks in rural areas.

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) believes rural fire problems can be reduced by teaching people to recognize the hazards. By following some of the outlined precautionary steps, individuals can greatly reduce their chances of becoming a fire casualty.

Wood Stoves

Wood stoves cause over 9,000 residential fires every year. Carefully follow the manufacturer's installation and maintenance instructions. Look for solid construction, such as plate steel or cast iron metal. Check for cracks and inspect legs, hinges and door seals for smooth joints and seams. Use only seasoned wood for fuel, not green wood, artificial logs, or trash. Inspect and clean your pipes and chimneys annually and check monthly for damage or obstructions. Be sure to keep combustible objects at least three feet away from your wood stove.

Electric Space Heaters

Buy only heaters with the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) safety listing. Check to make sure it has a thermostat control mechanism, and will switch off automatically if the heater falls over. Heaters are not dryers or tables; don't dry clothes or store objects on top of your heater. Space heaters need

space; keep combustibles at least three feet away from each heater. Always unplug your electric space heater when not in use.

Kerosene Heaters

Buy only UL-approved heaters and check with your local fire department on the legality of kerosene heater use in your community. Never fill your heater with gasoline or camp stove fuel; both flare-up easily. Only use crystal clear K-1 kerosene. Never overfill any portable heater. Use the kerosene heater in a well ventilated room.

Fireplaces

Fireplaces regularly build up creosote in their chimneys. They need to be cleaned out frequently and chimneys should be inspected for obstructions and cracks to prevent deadly chimney and roof fires. Check to make sure the damper is open before starting any fire. Never burn trash, paper or green wood in your fireplace. These materials cause heavy creosote buildup and are difficult to control. Use a screen heavy enough to stop rolling logs and big enough to cover the entire opening of the fireplace to catch flying sparks. Don't wear loose-fitting clothes near any open flame. Make sure the fire is completely out before leaving the house or going to bed. Store cooled ashes in a tightly sealed metal container outside the home.

Finally, having a working smoke alarm dramatically increases your chances of surviving a fire. And remember to practice a home escape plan frequently with your family.